THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840].

"*The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn.*"—ISAIAH 61: 1, 2.

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THE REPETITION OF SACRED ORDINANCES.

BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

THERE appears to be, among some of our people, an inadequate conception of the sanctity attending certain of the ordinances of the Holy Priesthood. True, the ministrations of those in authority amongst us are not attended with the pomp and worldly ceremony that characterize the procedure in other so-called churches, but the fact that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is in possession of the Priesthood is sufficient to make any and every ordinance administered by due authority within the Church an event of supreme importance. In performing any such ordinance, the one who officiates speaks and acts, not of himself and of his personal authority, but by virtue of his ordination and appointment as a representative of the powers of heaven. We do not set apart Bishops and other officers in the Church, with the show and ceremony of a gala day, as do certain sectarians, nor do we make the ordinance of baptism a spectacular display; but the simplicity of the order established in the Church of Christ ought rather to add to than take from the sacred character of the several ordinances.

An illustration of the fact that many do not understand the full sanctity of such ordinances is found in the desire some evince to have such repeated. Until within a few years it was a very general custom in the Church to allow a repetition of the baptismal rite to adults before they entered the temples.

This custom, first established by due authority, and for good cause (see "The Articles of Faith" by Talmage—144-148) finally came to be regarded by many members of the Church as essential, and indeed, "re-baptism" was generally looked upon, though wrongly, as separate and different from the first ordinance of the Gospel—baptism—by which alone may one gain entrance to the Church of Christ. But the most hurtful feature of this misunderstanding was the disposition of some to look upon the repeated baptisms as a sure means of securing forgiveness of sins from time to time, and this might easily have led to the thought that one may sin with comparative impunity if he were baptized at frequent intervals. This condition has been changed in the Church, and at the present time only those who, having been admitted to the fold of Christ by baptism, afterward stray therefrom or are disfellowshiped or excommunicated by due process of the Church courts, are considered as fit subjects to receive a repetition of the initiatory ordinance. These remarks, it must be understood, have no reference to the baptisms and other ordinances performed in the temples.

In the matter of administering to the sick, according to the order and practice established in the Church, care should be taken to avoid unwarranted repetitions. When an administration is made, and when the blessing pronounced upon the afflicted one has been received, the ordinance should not be repeated, rather let the time be given to prayer and thanksgiving for the manifestation of divine power already granted and realized. No limit should be or can be set to the offering of prayer and the rendering of praise to the Giver of good, for we are specially told to pray without ceasing, and no special authorty of the Priesthood or standing in the Church is essential to the offering of prayer; but the actual administration by anointing with oil and by the imposition of hands by those who hold the proper office in the Priesthood is an authoritative ordinance, too sacred in its nature to be performed lightly, or to be repeated loosely when the blessing has been gained.

Another ordinance claiming mention in this connection, though somewhat different from those already cited, is that of naming and blessing infants. In accordance with the rule of the Church, children born to members of the Church are taken to the monthly fast meetings in the several wards, and are there blessed and named by or under the direction of the bishopric. It is usual on such an occasion for the Bishop to call upon the father of the child, if he be present, and if he be an Elder, in good standing, to take part with the bishopric in the ordinance. This is in every way proper, for the blessing so pronounced is in the nature of a father's blessing. Record of the ordinance so performed in the ward meeting is made by the ward clerk.

However, a father holding the higher Priesthood, may desire to bless and name his child at home, perhaps at an earlier date than would be convenient or possible for mother and babe to attend a fast meeting in the ward. Many Elders desire to perform this ordinance within the circle of their own families on or about the eighth day of the child's life. This also is proper, for the father, if he be worthy of his Priesthood, has certain rights and authority within his family, comparable to those of the Bishop with relation to the ward. Too often amongst us the head of the family, though he hold the higher Priesthood, fails to magnify his calling as the spiritual head of his household.

It would be better if every Elder who is a father rose to the dignity of his position, and officiated in his holy office within his family organization. He may call to his aid any others who are worthy holders of the requisite authority in the Priesthood, but it is his privilege to stand as the head of his household, and to perform the ordinances pertaining to his family. The question arises, and has recently been presented in specific form, If an Elder performs the ordinance of naming and blessing his own child at home, is it necessary that the ordinance be repeated in the ward meeting? We answer, No; the father's blessing is authoritative, proper, and sufficient. But every such case *must be* promptly reported to the Bishop of the ward, who will direct the clerk to make full and proper record of the matter, entering the name of the child, with date of birth and blessing, and all data as to parentage, etc., on the books of the ward. It is the duty of the Teachers and Priests in their house to house visitations among the people to see that all such reports are fully and promptly made.

The repetition of the ordinance of naming and blessing children tends to diminish our regard for the authority and sanctity attending the father's blessing within the household.

But let it not be forgotton that if the child be not blessed and named by due authority at home it should be taken to the fast meeting of the ward on the earliest possible occasion, there to receive the blessing and to have its name duly entered on the books of the Church.

There is also another point in this connection to which attention may profitably be drawn. It is the too frequent use in the ordinary conversation of the Saints of the titles "Prophet, Seer and Revelator," "Apostle," etc. These titles are too sacred to be used indiscriminately in our common talk. There are occasions when they are quite proper and in place; but in our every-day conversations it is sufficient honor to address any brother holding the Melchisedek priesthood as Elder. The term Elder is a general one, applying to all those who hold the higher priesthood, whether they be Apostles, Patriarchs, High Priests or Seventies; and to address a brother as Apostle So and So, or Patriarch Such-a-one in the common talk of business and the like, is using titles too sacred to be in place on such occasions. It, in a lesser degree, partakes of the character of that evil of which we are so often warned—the too frequent use of the name of that Holy Being whom we worship, and of His Son, our Redeemer. To avoid this evil the saints in ancient days called the holy priesthood after the great High Priest Melchisedek, while the royal and correct title is, "The priesthood after the order of the Son of God." The use of all these titles continuously and indiscriminately savors somewhat of blasphemy, and is not pleasing to our Heavenly Father.—*Juvenile Instructor.*

VARIOUS SUPERSTITIONS.

THERE seems to be a natural craving in mankind to come into harmony with supernatural forces. Most mortals have an indefinable feeling that outside of all we can see and understand there are influences greater than ours and conditions that are brought about by superior intelligences. These feel-

ings, when associated with knowledge of truth, lead to pure religious devotion. When error fills the mind, however, they lead to superstition.

Among uncivilized peoples absurd beliefs and practices are most common, though superstition is not confined to savages. The American Indian believes that when he dies he will go to the happy hunting grounds, if he has been brave in battle and lived according to the ethics of the tribe, and there he will need his horses and weapons as he does here. When a brave dies, therefore it is not uncommon that one or a number of his ponies should be slain and with his weapons buried beside him. If a chief or the son of a chief, he would also need attendants, and it has happened sometimes that human beings were killed to accompany him on his expeditions. Another Indian superstition is that those who have lost their reason have some particular sanctity and should not be injured. Knowing this, white people have sometimes saved their lives by feigning harmless madness.

Although the negroes in America have became civilized, they retain many of the old superstitions and are very prone to make mystical associations between things. In the *Journal of American Folklore*, a writer says: "An old philosopher told me with great gravity: 'If you want peppahs to grow, you must git mad. My old 'oman an' me had a spat, and I went right out and planted my peppahs, an' they come right up!' Still another saying is that peppers, to prosper, must be planted by a red-headed, or by a high-tempered, person. The negro also says that one never sees a jay bird on Friday, for the bird visits his Satanic majesty to 'pack kindling' on that day. The three signs in which the negroes place implicit trust are the well-known ones of the ground-hog's appearing above ground on February 2nd; that a hoe must not be carried through a house or a death will follow; and that potatoes must be planted in the dark of the moon, as well as all vegetables that ripen in the ground (and that corn must be planted in the light of the moon). A negro will not burn the wood of a tree that has been struck by lightning, for fear that his house will burn or be struck by lightning. If a bird flies into a house it brings bad luck. If a crawfish or a turtle catches your toes it will hold on till it thunders. When a child, I was told by a black nurse that if a bat alighted on one's head it would stay till it thundered. This was so terrifying that even now I have an unnecessary fear of being clutched by a bat. To make soap, stir it with a sassafras stick in the dark of the moon."

Others besides Indians and Negroes permit themselves to be dominated by foolish superstitions. Napoleon believed himself to be led by a certain star, and it is related that on one occasion General Rapp, his aid-de-camp, found him gazing through his window into the heavens so intently that some time passed before he noticed the general. Becoming aware of his presence, however, Napoleon suddenly seized his arm and said, "Look up there!" Rapp replied quietly, "I see nothing but the pale twinkling of a star." "What! Is it possible that you do not see my star?" Napoleon cried with intense excitement. "The fiery red one, almost as large as the moon? It is before you now, and, ah, how brilliant!" Then he almost shrieked, "It has never abandoned me for a single instant. I see it on all great occasions. It commands me to go forward; it is my sign of good fortune, and where it leads I will follow."

The Shah of Persia, it is said, takes with him in his travels several mysterious objects. One is a circle of amber, which is believed to have fallen from heaven in the time of Mohammed. By this, he thinks to secure safety from all hurt. Another is a golden casket, which, he thinks, makes him invisible whenever he wishes. The third is a jewelled star, and the possession of this he believes gives him power to make conspirators confess their crimes.

Superstition enters very largely into different religions of the world and this gives them more power over the minds of worshippers. The Mohammedans will have no bells about their mosques—bells being, they say, an invention of the devil. From their high minarets, criers shout the muezzin, the call to prayer. At break of day, noon, shortly before and shortly after sunset, and at nightfall can be heard a voice from the high tower declaring "There is one God; Mohammed is His prophet. Come to prayer." The Roman Catholics, on the other hand, have incorporated the bell as an essential part of their worship. Besides carrying out their ordinary church ceremonies with the signals of bells, they have made the "curse by bell, book and candle" a solemn form of excommunication. On the occasion of such cursing the bell is tolled and three candles are snuffed out.

There is about us truly a world of intelligent beings, unseen by mortals except on rare occasions; and there is a sacredness that attaches to certain ceremonies and objects. It is possible for us to gain correct understanding of the unseen world, and to come into harmony with the Intelligence that rules all things; but to do so we must not follow after vain traditions. The Gospel of Christ is reasonable, for it is true. It is the only plan that will satisfy all the righteous yearnings of the human heart.

DEVOTION.

As pretty an instance of generosity as we have heard happened at Christmas time in Salt Lake City. Little Aymer Peterson, just over four years old, and Verna Nielsen, just under four, set out one afternoon to find Santa Claus. They wandered away from home in their mystical quest, but when night came they had searched in vain. They grew cold and weary and at length finding near a house some shelter from the wind, they lay down and went to sleep. That slumber would have been eternal if providence had not sent them succor. A lady discovered and awakened them in time to save their lives. As she took them into her home to warm and care for them, she was surprised to see that the boy had no jacket, and that the little maiden was wearing a garment evidently not made for her. She learned by questioning that the little hero had removed his coat and mittens and placed them on his companion to save her from the cold, and that he had shown the tenderest solicitude for her when they found they were lost. The hearts of the children beat ofttimes with loftiest impulses.

PERSECUTION and hatred by those who love not the truth are a legacy bequeathed by the Savior to all His followers; for He said they should be hated of all men for His name's sake. If we had ceased to be persecuted and hated we might fear; but the prospect is encouraging.—BRIGHAM YOUNG.

INDIFFERENCE TO RELIGION.

BY ELDER ROBERT L. ANDERSON OF THE LONDON CONFERENCE.

THERE is a marked falling off in church attendance in England. This has become so evident that it is the subject of press and pulpit. *The Morning Leader*, London, says, "On all sides, in the pulpit and out of it, it appears to be agreed that congregations as a rule have fallen off. It is not that they scoff at religion, but because they think they look in vain for religion in the church." The same paper has kindly placed a portion of its space at the disposal of the public to present their reasons and explain, if possible, why the people are staying away. A great many opinions have been expressed, and a few are here given:

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MORNING LEADER."

Sir,—I have been an enthusiastic militant churchman for twenty years, and have met personally the late Primate, and bishops, deans and curates, and when one sees their apparent desire for preferment, with its accompaniment of the big balance at the bank, with their equipages and servants, with my lord this and your grace that, with their seeming arrogance and ofttimes rudeness, with the large sums left behind, one is compelled to ask if at ordination they have consecrated themselves to His service Who said "I am among you as he who serves"—then we can see and understand how men of this age get disgusted with the deponents and exponents of Christianity.—Yours, etc.,

London, S.W. WANING ENTHUSIAST.

Sir,—Our churches are not full because we have too much humbug in the pulpit and among the office bearers. If we look through the great brewery share lists we find shares held by bishops, deans, clergymen and ministers who are preaching salvation and trading in damnation at the same time.—Yours, etc.,

J. WALKER,

Bromley, Kent. Temperance Ironsides.

Sir,—Ministers of the Establishment have their wages assured, and in the majority of cases it is nothing to them whether their congregations are large or small. Ministers of Nonconformist bodies are devoid of courage to denounce the sins and wickedness of the times.—Yours, &c.,

Hackney. F. H. PARSONS.

Sir,—I should say the chief cause is because the services are conducted in a monotonous manner. It is practically the same thing from the beginning of the year to the end. Why not make our churches places where we can study nature and help one another to search for the light and the truth, and so spend an interesting evening.—Yours, &c.,

A. D. THRAPSTON.

What is the reason for this falling away in church and chapel attendance? "Why this plain apathy and coldness?" These thoughts cross the mind of the honest investigator. After centuries of Christian endeavor, the world instead of approaching unity is becoming more divided and devoid of religious interest. Various theories and opinions are given for these results, and many faults are found. Some claim that the spread of "free thought" has caused churches to be badly attended. Others assume that education of the masses is responsible, for they no longer fear the result of not attending services.

The pew system has established a money qualification in the church, has robbed the poor of their rights and has chopped up the house of God into a number of private boxes where the seats are sold to the highest bidder, instead of being left free and open to the poor as well as to those possessed of money. To-day many of the ministers instead of feeding the flock are seeking to feed themselves, preaching for filthy lucre, not righteousness. These have bowed down to the golden calf, pride has stepped in and the poor are forgotten. The people are aroused to these deceptions. They realize that they are not hearing the Gospel of simplicity and oneness as taught by the Master.

Considering the utter lack of harmony that has existed among the various creeds for many centuries, the hundreds of sects, the different doctrines and the variety of interpretations of the Scriptures, it is not surprising to note the skepticism of the scholar and his rejection of theology as it is presented. The truly sincere seekers after truth become discouraged while investigating this chaotic condition.

There are to-day some who are utterly servile. To this class belong those who allow the minister or priest to be their conscience and who go to places of worship merely as a matter of form or custom. These drift with the tide; to think would bore them and to reason would be a nuisance. There are others who are absolutely indifferent. Amongst these may be found many thoughtful ones. Not being satisfied with the religious shams of the times and not receiving spiritual food, they drift into infidelity. Another class are those who by reason of temporal conditions, such as vigorous health and ample means, find church-going irksome. They love sport and indolence too much to be hampered with any religious duties or restraints. Still others are really earnest in their worship and are sincerely trying to do right. For such the Lord has provided a means of salvation if they will but obey. The pure Gospel of Christ has again come to the earth, and its missionaries are abroad endeavoring to teach all nations the only religion that is pleasing unto God and completely satisfying to the souls of honest men.

NEWS OF THE GREAT WEST.

(*Condensed from our Utah Exchanges*).

Murray, situated six miles south of Salt Lake City, was incorporated as one of the cities of Utah, January 3rd.

"Corianton," the play written by Orestes U. Bean, and based on the Book of Mormon, was produced in Logan recently and was very successful.

The Idaho state legislature was organized and began its biennial session at noon January 5th. The law-makers have before them among other things the election of a senator for Congress.

General William Booth of the Salvation Army held three services in the Salt Lake Theater, Sunday, January 4th. All were well attended. President Joseph F. Smith and other prominent men attended one or other of the meetings.

On account of Judge William M. McCarty's recent election to a seat on the supreme court of Utah, he has resigned his position of judge of the sixth judicial district. By proclamation of Governor Heber M. Wells, District-Attorney John F. Chidester has been appointed to take the vacant place, and Joseph H. Erickson has been appointed district attorney.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 1903.

EDITORIAL.

TO PREPARE FOR THE RESURRECTION.

WHAT preparation can we make for that time when there shall be a shaking and the bones of men shall come together "bone to his bone," and sinews, flesh and skin shall be added, and breath be given us that we may live? The resurrection will be a most important event for us, how can we make ourselves ready?

As Ezekiel says, bone shall go back to his bone; the body that rises will be the same as is laid down, though the elements will be cleansed and given other properties than they now possess. The false idea exists that when we rise from the dead we shall be given some ethereal body entirely different from the one we have on earth. Though that is doubtless a pleasant thought for those who have abused and defiled these tabernacles of flesh, yet they may be assured that from the identical corpse remaining behind when their spirit takes its flight will be drawn the elements to form the resurrected body that will rise on the day of judgment. It is, of course, well known that there are changes going on within our bodies constantly. We take food and that combined with the oxygen of the air becomes tissue. After a time it is worn out and thrown off from the body by means of the lungs, kidneys or skin, and new food is used to build up the wasted tissues again. There are, however, fundamental components of the body that never change. They endure from birth until death, and when the body is resurrected these are drawn together, however scattered they may have been, and are quickened by the Spirit, for resurrected bodies will have spirit and not blood within them.

It is plainly necessary then that we take care of our physical beings during life. The Prophet Joseph said that "all men will come from the grave as they lie down, whether old or young; there will not be 'added unto their stature one cubit,' neither taken from it." This is in harmony with the Savior's condition when He rose. The resurrected body was identically the same as had been laid in Joseph of Arimathæa's new tomb, and it even bore the marks of the nails and the spear. Every time we injure the body needlessly or in the commission of sin, we may be sure that the impress will remain even beyond the grave. Every thought and act leave their mark upon us. If righteous, they tend to beautify the countenance, and refine the whole body. If wicked or coarse they bring with them the marks of degradation. Criminals can be recognized even when they are not contemplating crime by the record in their faces of past misdeeds. Sin is ever unprofitable to us, even though we obtain forgive-

ness, and righteousness bears fruit of joy throughout eternity. If we were sensible of our future, we would not eat or drink what the Lord has forbidden, or do any cowardly or impure act, for we would feel that sin brings us too great a loss

Righteousness and obedience to the Gospel of Christ not only sanctify our bodies and make them, when resurrected, a joy and inestimable blessing to us, but also determine when we shall rise from the tomb. Ever since mortals first learned and accepted the plan of redemption, they have gladly anticipated the time when they might defy death and the grave and rise to a fulness of power and glory. Job in his anguish declared that he knew that his Redeemer lived, and though worms should destroy his body yet in his flesh he should see God. Doubtless he rose with the Prophets and Saints that came out of their graves directly after Christ's resurrection.

Since the angels declared unto the men of Galilee that Jesus should return as they had just seen Him go into heaven, the Saints have looked forward to being raised to meet Him in the cloud. The trump of God, the voice of the archangel and the shout of the Lord will not only startle living men, filling the righteous with rapture and the wicked with terror, but it will rouse the dead that sleep in Christ, and they shall rise first. At that time too the Lord has said that the heathen nations shall "be redeemed, and they that knew no law shall have part in the first resurrection, and it shall be tolerable for them" (Doctrine and Covenants sec. 45: 54). But to be priests and kings unto God and His Father, to obtain celestial glory and eternal dominion, it is necessary that we accept and be faithful to the true Gospel of our Lord and Master. He has but one Gospel and but one Church, and this bears His name. The Gospel is being preached by the Elders of Israel in this and other lands. It will go to every nation, and though despised by many of the wise and religious of this world, it is the only means mortals have of preparing themselves completely for the resurrection of the dead and the eternal judgment.

EMIGRATING CHILDREN.

Returning Elders and emigrating Saints sometimes take with them to Zion children not their own. Such a practice, we believe, should not be encouraged. When it does occur, however, the Elder or Saint should be provided with a document from the parents or guardian of the child authorizing him or her to have possession of it. It is necessary also in such a case that the person have papers showing ability to care for the child for the future. These are requirements made by the United States government. If they are not fulfilled the child will not be permitted to land, but will be deported back to its home at the cost of the person who has taken it away.

J. J. C.

Transfer.—Elder William H. Summerhays is transferred from the Norwich to the London conference.

Departures.—Elder Joseph H. Hertzig of the German mission sailed for home by s.s. *Norseman*, December 25, 1902; Elder Roy D. Thatcher of the London conference returned home by s.s. *Ottoman*, January 8, 1903.

A DISTRICT meeting will be held at Wolverhampton, Norwich conference, Sunday, January 25, 1903. The services will be held at 2:30 and 6:30 p.m. at the Co-operative Hall, Stafford Street.

THE PURPOSE AND CONQUEST OF SIN.

BY ELDER FREEMAN TANNER OF THE NORWICH CONFERENCE.

THE origin of the influence that produces evil is too far removed from us in the infinite past for us to comprehend its beginning. It seems, however, to be coeval with the force that works righteousness, and the existence of the two seems necessary for the recognition of either. We can appreciate the necessity of such opposing powers in the need of their results. The old and often repeated truth, "It is necessary to taste the bitter in order to appreciate the sweet," is a self-evident fact to every one, for we have all proved it in our own experiences. Wealth gained by honest labor after living years in poverty is more highly prized than mansions and lands inherited. Knowledge is valued when by laborious study ignorance has been overcome.

Though we are given no definite idea as to the origin of the influences that are the cause of so much sorrow and joy, God has revealed, in His word, the beginning of sin and truth, as far as the people of this world are concerned. It was, in what Jude calls, our "first estate," when we were gathered together in our Father's congregation in the spirit world. And according to Rev. xii: 7-13 (P. of G. P. Book of Moses iv), it was in this sphere that the two great vying powers gained each its champion, Christ in His characteristic humility advocating righteousness, the dragon with characteristic vanity advocating sin; the first with an eye single to the glory of His Father and the freedom of His brethren; the second with a consuming passion for personal gain, and the subjection of his brethren and Father. The one was a plan of love, the other a plan of ambition.

Looking on the conditions then existing through the medium of revelation with an understanding of the Gospel, the folly of Lucifer's scheme stands out in glaring letters. Let us therefore erase from our minds for a few moments this knowledge and receive his plan as a juror taking evidence. If we do this, it will appear more clear how the devil persuaded a third of the hosts of heaven not to submit to the decision of the Father. His plan was truly designed to appeal to all those in whose nature love of ease and irresponsibility is paramount; also to those who wished for neither knowledge nor advancement. In short, it was that we come upon earth and live in negative purity, with someone to do our thinking, then after a life of ease, in which would be no sorrow, no death, no sin, to be brought back into our Father's presence in blissful, sinless ignorance--in other words, to be babes through eternity. Such a picture painted in all its deceptive light by the most proficient impostor man has ever known, must have presented a most enticing design to all those who did not weigh the consequences. Thanks be to the wisdom of the First-born and the decision of His Father, it was rejected.

The two standards, we are told, were hotly contested, with the result that the son of the morning and his hosts were eternally banished from the courts

of glory to take up their abode in earth. There was great joy that sin had been eradicated from heaven, but mixed with it was the deep sorrow of knowing that everlasting separation and dishonor must be the lot of those who had misused their inherent powers. "The heavens wept over him." The Father weeping for His lost son; Jesus for His contentious brother. The curtain here drops upon the scene with the solemn foreboding, "Woe to the inhabiters of the earth, and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you." Sin had only shifted its fortress from heaven to earth, and here it has been waging war ever since. With what result, we have only to look into our histories, read our newspapers, open our eyes to the conditions that meet us on every hand. Truly did Paul declare it to be the god of this world.

Adam and Eve were the first to be enticed into the clutches of the adversary in his new home. Their fall brought into the world death and sin, which we as their posterity have inherited. The question has often been asked by the learned and the unlearned, by the believer and disbeliever, why, if God is all powerful and wise, did He not make our first parents capable to withstand the temptation of the serpent; or why, even now, does He not destroy sin's advocate, thus doing away with future transgression. Many shuffling answers have been given. Some by quoting Isaiah's words about the potter and the clay; some by pleading man's unstable judgment; and some by attributing it to the arbitrary judgment of nature: but all unite in declaring it to be the greatest calamity the world has ever known. Let us see if we can partly clear away the mystery in the light of modern revelation. It is not God's will to keep man by force from ever committing sin, but it is His purpose to save man from a state of sinfulness. The first condition would have been brought about by destroying all that is conducive to sin. The second condition will be accomplished by giving man a knowledge of sin and teaching him how to overcome.

Nothing so clearly illustrates this as the history of our first parents, who, for their great and noble work, have received so many unjust invectives from their ungrateful posterity. Their state, before they chose which of the contradictory commandments they would obey, was pure. They had no sin, because they had no knowledge of sinning. Hence they were in a position of negative salvation. By their disobedience of the negative law, they made sin and death the common lot of all their children. Our first parents having thus brought about what the world at large considers the greatest curse it has ever known, does it not appear rather strange from that standpoint that God should pay Adam such a high compliment as He does in Gen. 3: 22? "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." He plainly portrays here that man by his transgression has had his eyes opened so that his comprehension is like unto that of God and His Council in his being able to discern right from wrong. Another peculiar fact is that the perfect sacrifice of Jesus was prepared before the foundation of the world; still there would have been no need of it had Adam not sinned. The pith of the matter appears from this that Deity ordained sin to be in the world, not that we become the servants of sin but that we gain a knowledge of it as did He. Too many people believe in the old adage "where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." Such sentiments, however, are held only by the slothful. This

world is to school us in sin and its consequences; if we rise above it, we attain the end for which we were created; if on the other hand, we sink beneath it, we are guilty of misusing the liberty the Father has placed within us—our free agency. Is it not then justice when we suffer for sin?

As we follow the sacred narrative down from the fall to the Noachian age, it is only too clear how much Lucifer, by his crafty deceptions, increased his power over mankind. In little more than one thousand five hundred years, the inhabitants of the world had reached such a state of sinfulness, that it became necessary by the mighty deluge to destroy them, with the exception of eight souls. Still though by one stroke the subjects of sin were swept away, death's wily advocate immediately re-entered the field with confidence. His efforts were not in vain. Soon multitudes were rallying around his standard and worshiping at his shrine, and with few checks he has been victorious in the world ever since.

As we contemplate these conditions, past and present, we are sometimes led to ask, what the reason is for the victory of evil. Is it because our Creator has not given us sufficient strength? God is just, let us seek for the explanation elsewhere. Paul offers us the most comprehensive understanding of our natural position in his explanation of his own condition apart from Christ (Rom. 7). He here recognizes the evil which has been revealed to him by the law, but has no power to overcome it. He even consents, with his mind, to righteousness, but has no means of attaining it. "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with my flesh the law of sin." Some reading this have concluded it is possible to serve two masters—God and mammon. The first with the mind, the second with the body. This, however, is Paul's verdict on himself when left to his own resources—being without Christ. Stop not at the seventh chapter, but include the first three verses of Romans 8th in your research. "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

The student of art never gains eminence by admiring the work of others and mourning over his own inferior position. His success depends on his getting the spirit and doing for himself. So, too, with the Gospel, man must not be content to gaze from afar off. Admiration of Christ and His laws in all their ideal perfection, coupled with severe lamentations for one's own degraded position will never save or exalt him—and no one saw this more plainly than did Paul. One must get into the body of Christ. Then, as was the case with Paul, he will gain the cleansing power of the Holy Ghost. There is a force in every individual, not of overcoming sin, but of determining to overcome it. If this power is never used, the spirit will never be manifest. Again, if it is used, the Lord will not leave that person desolate. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." The reason, therefore, that the generations of man, past and present, are and have been in transgression, is negligence on the part of each person in exercising his inherent powers of will.

Since the individual is responsible it would be grossly incorrect to say, as do many, that a man is forced to heaven or hell. The powers of good and evil will strive within him, but by his own agency is the victory determined.

Inch by inch he will rise or fall, sometimes so slowly that under the closest observation it is hardly perceptible. A man does not not become an inveterate drinker in a day, nor is the soul of a criminal made callous by one act. It is a gradual process, and gradually it is overcome. The craving for the stimulant still clings to the reformed drunkard long after his resolution is made. The enticing pictures of temptation continue, for a long time, to appeal to the repentant criminal. Man, by the weight of his own fleshly lusts, sinks into sin from innocent babyhood. The law reveals his condition and the Spirit, which permeates the universe more widely than do the sun's rays, acts as a buoy to every person who is willing by faith, repentance and baptism to raise the blind that hides the light from his darkened soul.

As purification sets in, sin diminishes, till at last, if the struggle for truth is continued, a person can say as did Christ, "The prince of this world . . hath nothing in me." His purity then is not the purity of the babe in the mother's arms; neither is His righteousness like unto the negative righteousness of Adam in the garden of Eden. It is something higher, something nobler. Let us take an example. The pure and holy babe in the manger at Bethlehem was free from sin, and in Him lay all the latent powers to become the Christ. But you could not say that after thirty-three years of battle with the adversary no change had taken place. True, both were pure, but one was a higher standard than the other. Is it possible to believe that the forty days' and nights' fasting and prayer in the wilderness had no lasting result? Is it reasonable to suppose the weight of this world's sin resting upon His soul as He prayed in the garden of Gethsemane was without an eternal effect? Let us rather declare with Paul. "Though He were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." The child is pure; the saved soul is pure. The one is sinless because it has no power to sin. The other is holy because it has overcome sin. The innocence of the child is lovely, the righteousness of grey hairs is venerable.

This ideal condition of purity cannot be attained in this mortal sphere, Jesus only being excepted. "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves." But God in His merciful wisdom has prepared a place for mankind after they are relieved of this contentious flesh, in the spirit world where each can bear on his standard of truth from the place he laid it down in this life. If we are full of iniquity in this life, with the same measure will we go beyond the veil. The sinner, no matter what his professions, will be a sinner still; the saint, however lowly, will be a saint still. No mighty miracle will be wrought in the snapping of the death cord, "The king will leave his purple robes, the beggar will leave his rags"; but character, as it has been formed in mortality by obedience or disobedience to Christ's law, each will carry with him. Some, we are told, must be thrust down to hell, there in suffering to learn the wage of sin and overcome it. Others, we read, will pass into a comparative state of rest where they are completely cleansed from all that remains carnal within them. All, however, must gain the victory over Satan; for "every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" that Jesus is the Christ if they would gain any degree of glory. As death is unalterably connected with sin, those who are still found unrepentant to the last, and sinful, must suffer the second

death, which is banishment forever with the devil and his angels, the end of which none shall know save the partaker in it. Who can doubt the wisdom, justice and mercy of God in the redemption of His children; His wisdom in giving them a knowledge of sin; His justice in punishing them for not using His freely given means of overcoming sin; and His mercy in forgiving all who in true repentance wish to reform?

IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD.

Among the leading features of the religious world at large during the past year, may be mentioned the active movement for consolidation of various churches, the creed revision of the Presbyterians, and the appointment by the Pope of a Bible commission to study critically the sacred text.

The tendency to church federation seems to have affected all the religious bodies, except the Catholics. There has been formed a national body for the propaganda of this get-together idea, and the general bodies of no fewer than six denominations have unanimously approved the movement. Those who are specially interested, declare this federation to be the most striking development of the year, and others admit that it may grow into a sentiment which may compel divided Protestantism to come together.

The naming by the Vatican of a Bible commission is a proof that the Roman pontiff recognizes that there are questions affecting the Scriptures, which must be answered in the light of modern research. The commission is headed by Cardinal Parrochi, and has upon it the Very Rev. Dr. Charles P. Grannan, for ten years professor of sacred Scripture at the Catholic University in Washington. The only other English-speaking members are the Rev. Dr. Robert F. Clark of the Archdiocese of Westminister, England, and the Rev. David Fleming, the Irish scholar and superior general of the Franciscan Order. The liberty of the commission is somewhat curtailed, and for that reason, startling results from its labors are not expected.

An interesting question at this time arises as to what is the general result of the onslaught of "higher criticism" on the Scriptures, so far? Critics at one time were under the impression that they had kindled a new light in the world and were about to relegate the sacred volume to the shelves upon which the mythologies of antiquity are stowed away. But what has that criticism done, after all?

The question is best answered by Prof. D. S. Margoliouth, himself a "critic." In an article in the *Evening Bulletin*, Philadelphia, he says in part:

"The hypotheses which the higher criticism has produced have either broken down or been lost in a maze of hypotheses which are necessary to support the first. In the course of the procedure each place that seemed to offer firm ground has given way. Thus it was easy enough to assume the existence of two Isaiahs, but before that had been done the two turned into three, four, till now we are confronted with a score. To divide the Pentateuch between two writers was a simple process, but presently it is found that even a score is insufficient.

"Do we then in consequence of the researches of the higher critics know more about the structure and dates of the books of the Old Testament than was known in the eighteenth century, or to the mediæval rabbis? Very little, it must be confessed, if anything. . . . Even where there is most agree-

ment it is difficult to assert that the acuteness of the critics is any real substitute for the materials which either never existed or have perished. Even the unhistorical character of the books of Chronicles, whence the criticism of the Pentateuch may be said to start, is a hazardous assumption; for the chronicler certainly knew more of the history of his race, and had access to more of its literature than we. The assumption that the Tabernacle is a fiction, borrowed from the Temple, is also hazardous. We ought to know more of the conditions and habits of those to whom it is ascribed before we declare it to be probable. The supposition that the most brilliant monuments of a nation's literature all date from the time when its glory had passed away is attended with difficulties; we usually find that masterpieces of literary effort are either contemporary with or but slightly posterior to a nation's political prosperity."

That is an honest admission that so-called "higher criticism" is a failure.—*Deseret News.*

CURRENT EVENTS.

MARCONIGRAM FROM THE UNITED STATES.

Some time ago we mentioned that Signor Marconi had succeeded in sending wireless telegraphic dispatches across the Atlantic. During the latter part of the year messages were sent to King Edward and the King of Italy from Cape Breton, Canada, to Poldhu, in Cornwall, and replies were sent back by the wireless system. On the nineteenth instant the first messages were transmitted between the United States and Great Britain. President Roosevelt sent, from Wellfleet, Massachusetts station, greetings to King Edward, and His Majesty reciprocated. These messages had fifty-seven and sixty-nine words respectively. This is the greatest distance, we believe, over which the messages have been sent. The new system has proved to be practical, and may displace the system now in use as it is of course a great deal less expensive. It is proposed to send Marconigrams across the ocean for five pence per word in ordinary dispatches. If this can be done satisfactorily, the cable companies will have to readjust their tariffs or close up business, as the rate by cable is now one shilling. The new method of transmitting intelligence from continent to continent, ship to ship, or ship to land will have a wonderful effect upon future conditions. This will be very prominent in war, for there will be no cables to cut or telegraph lines to tear down. Messages can be sent from one side of a hostile country to the ocean or friendly country on the other side without the least trouble, and with complete secrecy as long as the codes are not revealed.

TRANSVAAL WAR CONTRIBUTION.

All parties, whether political friends or opponents, are agreed that Mr. Chamberlain's visit to South Africa is a happy piece of statescraft. We have spoken of the extreme enthusiasm with which he was received in Natal, and that colony's contribution of £2,000,000 to the late war expenses. In Transvaal the Colonial Secretary has had equal success. At the banquet given him last Saturday evening at Johannesburg, he announced that Transvaal's contribution to the same fund would be £30,000,000, to be raised in three yearly installments. The Imperial government also undertakes to make an immediate loan of £35,000,000 to the two new colonies for railroad building and other public works.

LITTLE FOXES.

SELECTED.

"Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines."—SOL. SONG, 2: 15.

Little foxes, spoiling
The beloved vine
Trusted to my tending
By the hand Divine;
Little foxes, wherefore
Have ye entrance found
To the vine so precious,
Growing in my ground?

Have ye leaped the fences?
Have ye climbed the wall?
Were there tiny openings?
Ye are very small,
And ye can creep slyly
Through a tiny place,
But I thought I closed up
Every open space.

And I watch by daytime,
And I watch by night,
For the vine you're spoiling
Is my heart's delight;
I have kept the earth-worm
From its precious root;
I have trimmed the branches,
But they bear no fruit;

For the little foxes
Have assailed the vine
Trusted to my tending
By the hand Divine;
And though I've been faithful
Since its birthday morn,
They were in the garden
When the babe was born.

For they were the failings
That I *would not* see
When they were *my* failings,
When they dwelt in me.

Little faults unheeded,
That I now despise,
For my baby took them
With my hair and eyes.

And I chide her often,
For I know I must;
Yet I do it always
Bowed down to the dust,
With a face all crimson
With a burning blush,
And an inward whisper
That I cannot hush.

And sometimes it seemeth
Like the voice of God,
And it says, "Poor coward,
Using now the rod
On a child's frail body,
Till I hear it moan,
And see it shrink and quiver,
For a sin thine own!"

Oh, my Father, pity,
Pity and forgive!
Stay the little foxes
I allowed to live
Till they left the larger
For the smaller vine—
Till they touched the dear life,
Dearer far than mine.

Oh, my Father, hear me,
Make my darling Thine;
Though I am so human,
Make her all divine;
Stay the little foxes,
That both vines may be
Laden with fruit worthy
To be offered Thee!

MRS. MARY CRAM.

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